



# AIM Certification

## HANDBOOK

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# Certification Handbook

## Getting started

### Step 1

Register. You can do this by calling the AIM office! If you are reading this document, it probably means you have successfully registered!

### Step 2

Log onto the AIM Online Teacher Training (OTT) site (<http://aimteachertraining.com>) and complete your profile. Add a photo of yourself if possible. Have a look around the site so you can become familiar with how it is organized. Be sure to go to this location on the site for an overview of how to navigate and use OTT:

<http://aimteachertraining.com/content/guide-getting-started>. You may view a complete video on how to use the site and there is a written version of the same information also available here: <http://aimteachertraining.com/help>. (Note: Some of the terminology has changed since this was recorded, but the essential components of the site are the same.)

### Step 3

Send a message to your mentor to let her know that you've successfully logged into the site. Go to <http://aimteachertraining.com/users/kareno> and click on "Message Karen". (This can be found under her photo.)

### Step 4

OTT includes 11 different modules on the AIM. The following are the ten sections found in each module on the site:

1. Introduction
2. Initial Reflection
3. Background
4. In Context
5. Activity Exploration
6. Panel Talk\*
7. Discussion
8. Quiz
9. Assessed Reflection
10. Final Self Assessment

\*Exception: Module #1 does not have a panel talk.

You may now begin the Module #1 and complete up to and including section # 8, the Quiz.

**NOTE: Section 9 is the Assessed Reflection. It is important that you complete Step 5 before the Assessed Reflection.**

## Step 5

It's important to get to know your mentor before you complete your first Assessed Reflection. Please write to your mentor to choose a time that's convenient for both of you to have a short (20 to 40 min.) conversation. The preferred method is Skype. If you don't have Skype, a phone conversation will work too.

### The Skype chat

Topics that will be discussed during the Skype chat:

- **Help us get to know you!** Tell your mentor about yourself and your teaching situation, for example:
  - The number of years you have been teaching with AIM
  - Workshops you have attended
  - Grade levels you teach and number of lessons per week
  - Which AIM kits you have taught and which ones you will use this year
- **Learn more about AIM Certification!** You and your mentor will have the opportunity to discuss the certification process. Some of the topics covered may include:
  - Why you signed up for certification
  - When you are hoping to complete your certification
- **Get all your questions answered!** You will have a chance to ask any questions you have about certification and about your mentor. Feel free to ask questions about your mentor's experiences!

## Step 6

Continue working through the modules. Ask questions when you have them.

- If you are having technical issues or have other questions regarding AIM Online Teacher Training, phone the AIM office (1-800-668-6288).
- Write a discussion post when you have general AIM questions. Go to the following site and click on “New Discussion topic”:  
<http://www.aimteachertraining.com/forum/22>.
- Write to your mentor when you have certification questions.

## Things to keep in mind

- ❖ You have 12 months to complete certification and you may work at your own pace throughout the process. Up to six hours of personal support, training and mentor guidance is allotted to each teacher who enters the program. You may want to set some personal goals for yourself to make sure you stay on track! We recommend setting a goal to complete one module every three months.
- ❖ Please note, if you are unable to finish your certification within the maximum 12-month period, we offer a three-month extension to the program for \$150, plus \$10/month for Online Teacher Training. Certification candidates who opt for this extension will be given up to 3.5 hours of additional mentorship and personal support. Please be sure to contact your mentor in advance if you think you need an extension.
- ❖ The first module "What Makes AIM an Accelerative Program?" must be completed first. All other modules can be completed in any order.
- ❖ It is not necessary to complete all components of a module before starting another one. You may customize this program to make it work for you! Just please keep track of what you have done and make sure that you complete all sections of all modules before the end of the certification process.
- ❖ Submit assignments one at a time and wait for feedback between each submission. This will help you to apply what you learn throughout your training and to build on your knowledge. (Note: A quiz is not an "assignment".)

- ❖ Quizzes and the 'Level 1 test' may be taken as many times as you like. Only the most recent score is saved. This means you may take the tests whenever you like. Some teachers like to take the test at the beginning of a module to get an idea of how many more things are left to learn!
- ❖ Make sure you always check your feedback for assignments! Your mentor may sometimes ask you questions even when she awards you a "pass".
- ❖ When you submit work to your mentor, you will either receive: 'pass' or 'further work required'. When you receive 'further work required', your mentor will give you specific information about what to include when you resubmit. Remember: the purpose of certification is to help you become the most effective AIM teacher you can be. Please write to your mentor before taking any video footage of you and your students in the classroom to make sure you are on track. Specific information about video can be found near the end of this document.

## **Certification Requirements**

For those of you who are visual learners, it may help to watch this guide: <http://aimteachertraining.com/content/guide-assessment-overview>. It is 6 minutes long. (Note: Some of the terminology has changed since this was recorded, but the essential components are the same.)

In order to qualify for certification you need to demonstrate that you are a competent AIM teacher in your particular teaching context. This means that if you only teach AIM in Grade 1, you don't need to demonstrate that you have used AIM's three-step inductive approach for the teaching of grammar in Grade 7! However, we do expect that you will have a theoretical understanding of every aspect of AIM in order to be certified.

In order to complete certification, you must complete three kinds of assessments: knowledge, bridge, and skill – you may find detailed descriptions of each below.

As part of becoming an AIM Certified Teacher, it is also expected that you will participate actively in the online AIM Forum, an active community of AIM teachers who share ideas to help improve each other's teaching practice.

## **Participation in the AIM Forum**

There is a great deal we can learn from each other as professionals. Teachers working on certification are required to complete a minimum of 20 forum posts (<http://aimteachertraining.com/community>). You may choose to share some of your

successes, ask questions, respond to questions posted by beginning AIM teachers or connect with others who live in your area. Your mentor will read all of your posts to make sure they are consistent with the AIM philosophy.

We also encourage you to join the broader AIM community through our open [AIM Forum](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

## **Knowledge Assessments**

- 11 Quizzes

There is one quiz for each module. Each question is in multiple-choice format and has between 1 and 4 possible answers. You are required to score at least 80% on each one. Although they can be written any time, teachers generally write quizzes at the end of each module.

- 1 Level Test

This test has 50 questions and is in the same format as the quizzes. You are required to score at least 80% and the test may be written at any time.

## **Bridge Assessments**

- 11 Reflections

These assessments form the bridge between the knowledge and skill assessments. In them, you will apply the knowledge you have learned to your particular teaching context. They are called "reflections" and you will complete one per module. The purpose of the reflections is to help you to refine your teaching in preparation for the skill assessments. When completing your reflections, you are encouraged to mention areas that you feel need work and improvement so that your mentor can help you address them! It is a good idea not to leave the reflections that you find most difficult for the end of your certification. Instead, tackle the aspects of the AIM you find most challenging first so that you have the maximum amount of time to work on developing these skills.

## **Skill Assessments**

- Written samples

In order to complete certification, some samples of student work must be submitted. Exactly what this looks like will vary based on the age of students you teach. Generally your mentor will expect to receive rough drafts (with an error correction code) as well as good copies of story retelling. Samples from both weaker and stronger students should be included. A reflection about the work submitted should be included. Written samples are generally submitted near the end of certification and your selection should be completed only after you have worked through the module "Language Manipulation and Creative Writing".

- Video samples

The video samples are usually the very last assignment submitted. You may include several short samples or one longer sample, but in either case, the total video should be about 30 minutes in length. The video must include at least one example of each of the following types of activities:

- a whole-class activity
- a partner/group activity
- an activity that demonstrates
  - how you take advantage of teachable moments
  - how you model written activities with the class
  - the oral proficiency of your students

Your mentor may request other activities based on your context and the topics discussed in your reflections.

## **Completing Certification**

Once you have passed all assessments and have written at least 20 discussion posts, you will be granted your certification! Your online status will change from "pre-cert" to "certification" and you will receive a certificate in the mail. Congratulations!